United Nations E/ICEF/2016/8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 April 2016

Original: English

For information

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Annual session 2016
14-17 June 2016
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

Summary

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2001/4, the present report summarizes the response of UNICEF to the recommendations contained in recent reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) that are directly relevant to UNICEF. The nine reports included in this report were issued by the JIU from December 2014 through December 2015.

* E/ICEF/2016/5.

16-06241 (E) 220416

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I. Introduction

1. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) annually issues reports and notes addressed to the executive heads of United Nations organizations that have accepted the Unit's statute. Each report or note contains a series of recommendations for consideration by either the executive heads or the legislative/governing bodies of the organizations (see the list of reports and recommendations in annex I). The UNICEF report to its Executive Board provides, inter alia, a brief overview of the UNICEF response to relevant reports issued by the JIU from December 2014 through December 2015 and comments on JIU recommendations that have been directed to UNICEF (see annex II). The complete reports and notes of the JIU as well as any further annexes and comments, e.g., by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, may be obtained through the JIU website (www.unjiu.org) or through the hyperlinked titles of each report in section II of the present document.

2. Since the submission of the previous report (E/ICEF/2015/6) to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2015, UNICEF has continued to work with the JIU on various reviews conducted under its auspices and to follow up on the recommendations contained in the reports. This interaction on issues of common interest has increased the relevance of JIU reports, improved the implementation of their recommendations and enhanced transparency. Furthermore, member organizations of the Chief Executives Board have continued to provide consolidated responses to various JIU reports.

II. Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

3. The nine reports of direct relevance to UNICEF are summarized below. Additional comments are provided on each report and the relevant recommendations in annex II.

A. Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2014/6)

4. The report describes and analyses the evolution, development and status of the evaluation function in the United Nations system, as assessed in 2013. Its purpose is to help to strengthen the capacity of the evaluation function to meet professional standards, address emerging and global challenges across the system and contribute towards enhancing the value of the United Nations system.

UNICEF comments

5. UNICEF found this to be a useful report, containing a considerable amount of detailed evidence and analysis, while succeeding in reaching relevant conclusions and practical recommendations. The methodology used was generally sound, as it was based on agreed evaluation principles and standards. However, the report emphasized the role and performance of the central evaluation function and only limited attention was given to the decentralized evaluation function at the regional and country levels. The latter is an important dimension of the UNICEF evaluation

system. Nevertheless, the UNICEF evaluation function was found, overall, to be well developed and of a high standard. UNICEF was also found to be one of only three United Nations agencies committed to supporting national evaluation capacity development.

B. Use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations — country case studies: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and India (JIU/REP/2014/8)

6. The review provides an assessment from a system-wide perspective of the use of non-staff personnel, including relevant policies, regulations, contractual practices and associated managerial processes in the United Nations system organizations. It includes quantitative and qualitative information on the use of non-staff personnel; a comparative analysis of current organizational policies and practices; and evolutionary trends of non-staff categories within the total workforce of the JIU participating organizations.

UNICEF comments

7. The report offers critical insights into the use of consultants, along with the possible risks associated with the use of such types of contracting and staffing. UNICEF recently updated its consultant and individual contractor's policy as well as the associated business processes, which reflect most of the recommendations made in the report. UNICEF has developed guidelines and monitoring mechanisms; its non-staff policy calls for due consideration of gender and geographic diversity.

8. UNICEF notes that the overall value of the report could have been increased by means of a more thorough discussion of the reasons for and benefits of the engagement of non-staff personnel, along with the further highlighting of control measures that could ensure that delegated hiring managers use non-staff contracts appropriately. The decentralized use of non-staff contracts enables a greater level of agility and flexibility in staffing, which is particularly critical for organizations like UNICEF that rely on contingent staff to provide the surge capacity that allows rapid response to global demands, such as humanitarian emergencies.

9. As such, UNICEF is concerned that a call for a harmonized policy approach would risk disregarding the different natures of and environments in which United Nations agencies operate and, as a result, could have a negative impact on the quick delivery of results for children. In addition, UNICEF is concerned that producing such a "single" approach might not reflect the different needs, resources and work of each organization within the common system, thus hampering the needed flexibility. Moreover, UNICEF is concerned that predetermined remuneration levels, as recommended in the report, could constrain the full and effective application of the competitive selection processes that are based on the best-value-for-the-money principle.

C. Contract management and administration in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2014/9)

10. The JIU conducted the review to analyse how the organizations of the United Nations system manage contracts for goods and services after award, with a view to identifying good practices and lessons learned, exploring areas for further improvement and enhancing coherence system-wide.

UNICEF comments

11. UNICEF welcomes this report of the JIU on contract management and administration in the United Nations system, noting that the proper management of contract activities is a fundamental requirement for good management. United Nations organizations support most of the findings and recommendations included in the report, with many noting that they plan to apply the lessons learned to strengthen policies and procedures, as appropriate. For some organizations, it may not be conducive from a cost-benefit perspective to implement all the recommendations fully.

D. Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations: summary report (JIU/REP/2015/1)

12. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide information to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the legislative and governing bodies of the participating organizations and the members of Chief Executives Board on how the United Nations system organizations have implemented the resolutions aimed at mainstreaming or supporting the decent work agenda, with a view to using the lessons learned in the finalization of the post-2015 agenda. The purpose of the evaluation is not to review International Labour Organization (ILO) activities to mainstream decent work, but rather the United Nations system's response.

UNICEF comments

13. UNICEF welcomes the JIU report on the mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work. As noted in the report, UNICEF has mainstreamed the decent work agenda in the work of the organization within its mandate, particularly in the area of social protection as a key pillar of that agenda. UNICEF continues to strengthen its work in social protection and, consistent with recommendation 6 of the report, has already begun work to systematize linkages between social protection and other areas of the organization's work.

E. Recommendations to the General Assembly of the United Nations for the determination of parameters for a comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States (JIU/REP/2015/2)

14. The objective of the report was to make recommendations in order to facilitate the work of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session in determining, as soon as possible, and by no later than March 2015, the parameters of a comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States, with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of such support and respective roles in supporting the sustainable development of small island developing States in order to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach by the United Nations system to further improve and strengthen its overall effectiveness.

UNICEF comments

15. UNICEF welcomes the JIU report and agrees with the key recommendations aimed at strengthening the effectiveness, coordination, accountability, communications and synergies among institutional partners for better service delivery for small island developing States.

F. Cooperation among the United Nations regional commissions (JIU/REP/2015/3)

16. The objective of the review is to assess, as applicable to different regional contexts, the relevance and effectiveness of (a) cooperation among the regional commissions; (b) cooperation between the regional commissions and other United Nations system entities, especially in the framework of the Regional Coordination Mechanism; and (c) the interface between regional and global governance and decision-making bodies of the regional commissions.

UNICEF comments

17. UNICEF welcomes the JIU report and finds its recommendations useful to further strengthen regional linkages towards a fit-for-purpose United Nations development system at the regional and country levels.

G. Public information and communications policies and practices in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2015/4)

18. The objectives of the review are: (a) to provide a comparative assessment of the respective arrangements relating to the public information and communications function within the United Nations system organizations and to propose benchmarks for a strategic approach to communications; and (b) to assess the current mechanisms of system-wide coordination among these organizations, both at their headquarters and in the field.

UNICEF comments

19. UNICEF welcomes the JIU report and concurs with its main findings. UNICEF especially welcomes the recommendations made by the JIU to enhance the strategic role of public information and communications functions, but would urge that even more explicit emphasis be placed on the strategic importance of communications in public advocacy and engagement to bring about sustainable change, and not just for the purposes of public information.

H. Review of activities and resources devoted to address climate change in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2015/5)

20. The review provides an overview of existing resources and activities devoted to addressing climate change across the organizations of the United Nations system, and expects to contribute to enhanced coordination and increased effectiveness of the work of the organizations regarding climate change. It also aims to support the governing bodies and the organizations of the United Nations system in creating the instruments necessary for future improvement in monitoring and reporting and, importantly, in accountability regarding the use of resources and the implementation of activities to respond to the system-wide mandate on sustainable development.

UNICEF comments

21. The report constitutes a timely informative input, providing an overview of activities and resources used within the United Nations system based on responses received from the JIU participating organizations and multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, especially given the decision of the High-level Committee on Programmes, made at its thirtieth session in October 2015, that expressed support for the need to develop a system-wide approach to coordinated action on climate change. The strategy will take a phased approach; a draft of the first part of the strategy was presented at the Committee meeting, held in March 2016. UNICEF is providing inputs to the task team that is preparing the strategy.

I. Review of the organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2015/6)

22. The objective of the review was to make an independent assessment of the functioning of the ombudsman offices in United Nations system organizations. The review seeks to map the ombudsman policies and practices across the United Nations system, including reviewing and comparing their mandates and office structures, their allocation of human and financial resources relative to the size of the organization and their operations, the accessibility of ombudsman services to the staff of the organization and the reporting lines to and cooperation with senior management and the legislative bodies. In addition, the review was to capture and analyse the perceptions of the main groups of clients (staff and management) and their satisfaction with the services provided by the Offices of the Ombudsman. The JIU review was also to provide an assessment of practices and prospects as well as of the limitations of cooperation among ombudsmen in different entities of the

United Nations system and to identify good practices in the activities of the Offices of the Ombudsman in the system.

UNICEF comments

23. The recommendations are generally supportive of the ombudsman function in the United Nations system, as an informal mechanism for dispute resolution. The Office of the Ombudsman for United Nations Funds and Programmes welcomes the attention that this report gives to an often underutilized and misunderstood organizational resource for resolving workplace issues: informal conflict resolution. Some recommendations are welcomed, and if implemented, could enhance awareness of the added value of the ombudsman function in helping to foster a work environment in which the strategic objectives of the organization can be realized.

Ongoing and forthcoming Joint Inspection Unit reports and notes

24. UNICEF is participating in ongoing JIU reviews scheduled for completion in 2016 and looks forward to presenting its comments on them to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2016. Below is the preliminary list of such reports:

(a) Review of administrative services delivery in selected United Nations system organizations (expected completion: 2016);

(b) Review of knowledge management in the United Nations system (expected completion: 2016);

(c) Donor-led accountability and oversight reviews in United Nations system organizations (expected completion: 2016);

(d) Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States: final findings (expected completion: 2016);

(e) Review of travel policies in the United Nations system (expected completion: 2016);

(f) System-wide review of results-based management, phase II (expected completion: 2016);

(g) Independent system-wide evaluation mechanism I: Meta-evaluation and synthesis of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) evaluations with a particular focus on poverty eradication (expected completion: 2016);

(h) Independent system-wide evaluation mechanism II: Evaluation of the contribution of the United Nations development system to strengthen national capacities for statistical analysis and data collection to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internally agreed development goals (expected completion: 2016);

(i) Fraud prevention and detection in the United Nations system (expected completion: 2016);

(j) Status of the internal audit function in the United Nations development system (expected completion: 2016).

Annex I

List of Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations, December 2014 — December 2015

JIU report symbol	*Report title*	*Total number of recommendations contained in the report*	*Total number of recommendations addressed to UNICEF Executive Head*	*Total number of recommendations addressed to UNICEF Executive Board*
JIU/REP/2014/6	Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system	9	5	2
JIU/REP/2014/8	Use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations — country case studies: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and India	13	11	1
JIU/REP/2014/9	Contract management and administration in the United Nations system	12	9	2
JIU/REP/2015/1	Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations: summary report	6	1	0
JIU/REP/2015/2	Recommendations to the General Assembly of the United Nations for the determination of parameters for a comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States	6	0	0
JIU/REP/2015/3	Cooperation among the United Nations regional commissions	7	0	0
JIU/REP/2015/4	Public information and communications policies and practices in the United Nations system	6	5	1
JIU/REP/2015/5	Review of activities and resources devoted to address climate change in the United Nations system organizations	6	4	1
JIU/REP/2015/6	Review of the organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system	8	7	1
Total		**73**	**42**	**8**

Annex II

Summary of the status of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations addressed to UNICEF, December 2014-December 2015

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2014/6)	
1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body	
Recommendation 3 The legislative bodies should request the executive heads of United Nations system organizations to develop comprehensive budget frameworks and resource allocation plans for their respective evaluation functions, based on the cost of maintaining an effective and sustainable evaluation function that adds value to the organization. The plans should be submitted for consideration to the legislative bodies within existing budgetary and reporting mechanisms and processes.	**Accepted and implemented** Funding for the UNICEF Evaluation Office is included in the UNICEF Integrated Budget 2014-2017, approved by the Executive Board in 2013. Expenditure under the Integrated Budget is reported annually to the Board. Costed evaluation plans are prepared to accompany new country programme documents. These plans are available for consideration by members of the Board. The revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF, approved by the Board in 2013, requires UNICEF to allocate 1 per cent of total programme expenditure to evaluation. Expenditure on evaluation is reported to the Board in the annual report on the evaluation function.
Recommendation 4 The legislative bodies should direct the executive heads of United Nations system organizations to review and revise, as necessary, existing policies for the appointment of the heads of evaluation offices, in order to enhance independence, integrity, ethics, credibility and inclusion, with due regard to the following criteria: • Term limits should be established for a single non-renewable term of office of between five and seven years, with no possibility for the incumbent of re-entry into the organization; • The head of evaluation should have qualifications and substantial experience in evaluation, complemented by experience in the related fields of strategic planning, basic and operational research and knowledge management, and should have excellent management and leadership attributes.	**Accepted and implemented** The revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF, approved by the Executive Board in 2013, requires that the head of the Evaluation Office have qualifications and experience of the kind indicated in the recommendation and that the head be appointed for a term of four years, renewable once, with no possibility of re-entry into the organization. The Board has called for a peer review of the evaluation function and it is expected that the policy will be revised in the light of the findings and recommendations of the peer review and other relevant assessments.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head	
Recommendation 2 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should adopt a balanced approach in addressing the purpose of evaluation for accountability, and for the development of a learning organization that has the appropriate incentive systems for innovation, risk-taking and the use of multidisciplinary perspectives.	**Accepted and implemented** This recommendation is addressed by the Evaluation Policy (2008) of UNICEF and the revised Policy (2013), which stress the importance of evaluation for both organizational learning and accountability and also suggest the accountability structure for our decentralized evaluation function.
Recommendation 5 The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), should request the United Nations Evaluation Group to collaborate in developing a robust and harmonized quality-assurance system for the evaluation function across the United Nations system.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF will promote and support the initiative through the CEB.
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should make the use of evaluation an organizational priority based on a well-defined vision, strategy and results framework for the evaluation function, and report to their legislative bodies on the level, nature and impact of use of evaluation.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF already has an evaluation policy that provides details regarding the structure and accountabilities associated with our decentralized evaluation function. Annual plans at the country office, regional office and headquarters levels include the activities and priorities relating to the evaluation function, which include quality assurance and dissemination and use, and the management response to evaluations. In 2016, a corporate action plan will be developed in support of the 2013 evaluation policy. The annual report to the Executive Board on the evaluation function covers progress on the coverage, quality and use of evaluations.
Recommendation 7 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should request evaluation offices to reassess the policies, strategies and priorities of the evaluation function. They should strategically position the evaluation function in their respective organizations so as to enhance its relevance in enabling the United Nations system to address current changes and challenges, and to achieve impact and sustainability.	**Accepted and ongoing** The evaluation function of UNICEF has undergone peer review twice and there will be an external peer review of the system in 2016. The review will serve as an evidence base for further strengthening the evaluation function. The scope of the peer review will include issues relating to resource allocation, impact and sustainability.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 9 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should develop the institutional framework and necessary support systems to enhance the quality and added value of decentralized evaluation and the role it could play in supporting the United Nations system to address emerging challenges, including those of the post-2015 development agenda, and to enhance coherence and alignments in evaluation within and across United Nations system organizations, and with national institutions.	**Accepted and implemented** The decentralized evaluation function of UNICEF already provides the institutional framework, and the external peer review (2016) will provide further evidence and guidance for the strengthening of the system. There is a continued push and effort to further enhance the system by improving capacity and resource allocations in light of emerging needs. UNICEF will also continue to work with and support global (EvalPartners), regional and national institutions in their efforts to boost the contribution of evaluation in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
Use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations — country case studies: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and India (JIU/REP/2014/8)	
1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body	
Recommendation 2 The legislative/governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should systematically exercise their oversight functions on the use of non-staff personnel through regular reviews of non-staff personnel information/data provided by the respective executive heads.	**Accepted and implemented** The oversight of the use of consultants is generally performed by the operations and management function, which ensures the accurate application of policy. Performance indicators and other relevant data are monitored at various levels in the organization under the delegated authority of the Executive Director.
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head	
Recommendation 1 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should revise their non-staff policies, including the definition of non-staff and the criteria for the use of non-staff personnel, by using the employment relationship principle in accordance with relevant labour recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO).	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF supports this recommendation, which calls for a policy review of the use of non-staff personnel. However, we note that the application of international labour principles is a matter for legislative bodies and Member States to determine, not the executive head.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 3 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should review the use of non-staff personnel with a view to identifying long-serving non-staff personnel under a de facto employment relationship and establish a plan (short- to medium-term) to terminate the inappropriate prolonged use of non-staff personnel. The plan, including resources required, should be presented to the legislative/governing bodies for endorsement and provision of the necessary financial support.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF supports this recommendation and has included mandatory breaks in service and limited the duration of consultants' contracts in its policy. Wherever funds are available, offices are encouraged to create positions, instead of consultancy contracts, and individual consultants and contractors are invited to compete in the process. At the same time, funding restrictions have to be taken into consideration, particularly since most non-staff contracts are funded by volatile project funds.
Recommendation 4 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should strengthen their internal monitoring, control and oversight of the use of non-staff personnel, through the sustained application of effective internal control mechanisms, systematic corporate monitoring and information/data collection, analysis and audits. They should ensure that a central department/unit at the corporate level is held responsible for global monitoring, analysis and reporting on the issue.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF supports this recommendation and has already implemented various corporate oversight systems on the global level, while noting that the actual contracting and management of consultants has been delegated to the heads of offices and division directors.
Recommendation 5 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure periodic analytical reporting both internally (to senior management) and externally (to the respective governing body) on the use of non-staff personnel in their organizations. Such reports should include detailed data and analysis on the use of non-staff, including the number of non-staff and associated expenditure, their weight in the total workforce, the breakdown of contractual modalities and the areas and locations used, the developing trends and the potential risks and corresponding measures.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF supports this recommendation, and this data is available in its enterprise resources planning system and is currently being transferred into the Virtual Integrated System of Information-One Enterprise Resource Planning (VISION) Manager's Dashboard.
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that updated and consolidated practical guidelines on the use of non-staff personnel are in place to guide managers involved in decision-making on the use of non-staff contractual modalities.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF supports this recommendation and has already developed practical guidelines.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 7 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that individuals working for the organization under third-party/outsourcing contracts have decent working conditions, including a fair salary and social benefits and entitlements.	**Accepted and implemented** While UNICEF supports this recommendation in principle, the extent to which it can influence working conditions and its ability to influence salaries, social benefits and entitlements to third parties are limited, as contractors are required to comply with all local laws and regulations, which would include labour laws and minimum wage requirements.
Recommendation 8 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that the gender balance policy and related measures include non-staff personnel, including United Nations Volunteers (UNVs). Gender balance in non-staff personnel recruitment should be promoted and monitored as part of the overall gender equality policy.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF supports this recommendation and has already included it as a requirement in its non-staff policy. Gender and geographical representation should be implemented in the context of competitive bidding processes and the relevant procurement principles.
Recommendation 9 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should allow long-serving non-staff (including UNVs) to apply as internal candidates for vacant staff positions, with a view to ensuring fairness and providing a measure to reduce long-serving non-staff in the organizations.	**Under consideration** While UNICEF supports this recommendation in principle, it calls for a system-wide policy review. The High-level Committee on Management considered such a review at its meeting in Vienna in March 2016, and UNICEF will contribute fully to it.
Recommendation 10 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that there is a clear, fair and rational mechanism for the determination and adjustment of remuneration levels of non-staff personnel, particularly in respect of long-serving non-staff.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF sets consultants' fees on the basis of a competitive process for specific terms of reference on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, the outcome of the competitive process and the "best value for money" and market rate dictate the consultant fees. Therefore, a predetermined remuneration could limit and constrain the full and effective application of the competitive selection process, and standard remuneration packages may not yield the "best value for money". Also, assignments are normally based on case-specific terms of reference which, combined with the competitive bidding principles, may render the establishment of standard remuneration packages counterproductive.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 11 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that long-serving non-staff personnel (including United Nations Volunteers (UNVs)) have access to appropriate formal internal justice mechanisms. To that end, the executive heads should consider allowing them access to existing mechanisms or establish another practical system for their use.	**Not accepted** On the basis of the decisions of the General Assembly (resolutions 61/261 and 67/265), the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations cannot allow non-staff to access the existing formal justice system without a decision to that effect by the Assembly. The Secretary-General has offered an alternative proposal to the Assembly, which has decided to remain seized of the matter, without having returned to it. In the interim, non-staff continue to be referred to arbitration. This recommendation should be addressed to the Assembly and not the executive heads of the United Nations organizations.
Recommendation 12 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, as a matter of priority, should ensure and formalize the access of non-staff personnel (including UNVs) to mediation, the Ethics Office, the Office of the Ombudsman and other informal conflict-resolution mechanisms, and ensure that such personnel have recourse to the policies on the prevention of harassment and whistle-blowing. Furthermore, non-staff should be informed of those rights.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF supports this recommendation. It is already practiced widely by the Ethics Office and the Office of the Ombudsman, providing services to non-staff and reflected in important policies. However, a few additional policy amendments may be required to make this more explicit.
Contract management and administration in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2014/9)	
1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body	
Recommendation 1 The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should direct the executive heads of their organizations to update and, when necessary, develop specific policies, procedures, guidance and follow-up systems to ensure effective and efficient management of post-award contract activities.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF has specific policies and procedures for post-award contract activities, including a contracts management module in the procurement e-learning course and specific AGORA self-training on this topic.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 3 The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should direct the executive heads of their organizations to put in place a system whereby the persons designated to manage contracts after award are notified in writing about their accountability and responsibilities when managing a contract, and possess the required qualifications to manage the contract.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF is compliant with the recommendation as the contract management duties and responsibilities are built into the job description of staff responsible for any of these duties. While noting that recommendation 3 is directed at legislative bodies, and while agreeing with the need for contract managers to have the appropriate qualifications and to accept the responsibilities and accountabilities inherent in that role, UNICEF agrees with the general view of the organizations that implementing processes that generate notification in writing seem to be impracticable and administratively inefficient, especially in environments with a large procurement portfolio. Therefore, a cost-benefit analysis would be necessary to determine the value of implementing such a system.
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive heads	
Recommendation 2 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should incorporate in their annual statements of internal controls certifications, by individuals with procurement and contracts management authority that the execution of contracts has been in full compliance with the organization's policies, procedures and rules.	**Under consideration** UNICEF will examine the cost-effectiveness of this recommendation.
Recommendation 4 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should re-assess the financial and human-resource needs for post-award contract management in terms of current and projected contract volume, value, complexity and type and decide on the best support structures required (e.g., centralized or decentralized) to ensure best value for money and the achievement of the organization's objectives.	**Accepted and implemented** This recommendation has already been implemented through the approved centralization of service procurement by the New York headquarters of UNICEF.
Recommendation 5 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should develop a specific contract-management training programme in their organizations that would include courses offered as a requirement for all persons managing contracts of a certain size, value and complexity.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF has a contracts management module in the procurement e-learning course and specific AGORA self-training on this topic.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that supervisors of persons managing contracts incorporate contract-management criteria in these persons' annual performance evaluations.	**Accepted and implemented** With the rollout of the new UNICEF performance management system (Achieve), supervisors will evaluate their staff on activities specifically relating to the office/divisional work plan deliverables. In this context, their efforts to effectively manage vendor relationships and contracts will be assessed.
Recommendation 7 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that for contracts of a certain value and complexity risk-management plans are in place covering post-award contract activities. These plans should include risk-mitigation measures and also clear designation of responsibility to those persons executing such measures.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF Contracts Review Committee submissions highlight contract management risks, depending on the value, risk and complexity of contract award recommendations, and also include mitigation plans and responsibilities.
Recommendation 8 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that a system exists in their organizations for documenting and reporting on a contractor's performance in meeting contract requirements, and assign responsibility and management accountability for completeness of the contractor's performance reporting.	**Accepted and implemented** The UNICEF Supply Division has implemented the recommendation for goods procurement and services contracting, in accordance with chapter 6, section 7, of the UNICEF Supply Manual.
Recommendation 9 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should conduct a study in their organizations to analyse the causes of modifications in contracts above certain thresholds and identify systemic deficiencies contributing to cost increases and delays. Remedial action should follow to address such deficiencies.	**Accepted and in progress** A request has been submitted to the VISION Coordination Group in the Supply Division for VISION enhancements to enable the analysis of contract amendment times.
Recommendation 10 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that, when applicable, appropriate levels of liquidated damages and other remedies are included in the standard clauses of contracts and are judiciously enforced to protect the interests and rights of their organizations.	**Accepted and implemented** The liquidated damages clauses are part of the standard contractual provisions of UNICEF.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 11	**Accepted and implemented**
The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should augment the capabilities of their existing information technology systems such as Enterprise Resource Planning systems, or consider other specialized contract-management systems, to support the management of post-award contract activities based on a cost/benefit analysis and taking into account the level of need for such functionality.	This is being considered in connection with other system- related enhancements (VISION).

Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations: summary report (JIU/REP/2015/1)

1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body

None.

2. Recommendations addressed to the executive heads

Recommendation 6	**Accepted and in progress**
Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct their respective technical units to re-examine their work to identify if there are areas where the decent work agenda can be linked to their activities and to make existing linkages more explicit. Such organizations may wish to cooperate with ILO for support in this process.	UNICEF has already mainstreamed the decent work agenda in the work of the organization within its mandate, particularly in the area of social protection as a key pillar. We work closely with ILO and others through such mechanisms as the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board on a division of labour that is complementary.

Recommendations to the General Assembly of the United Nations for the determination of parameters for a comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States (JIU/REP/2015/2)

No recommendations addressed to UNICEF

Cooperation among the United Nations regional commissions (JIU/REP/2015/3)

No recommendations addressed to UNICEF

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Public information and communications policies and practices in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2015/4)	
1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body	
Recommendation 1 The legislative/governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to embrace the nine benchmarks proposed in the present report, in order to enhance the strategic role of the public information and communications function in contributing to the achievement of organizational goals and priorities, thereby promoting global support for their organization.	**Accepted and in progress** Many of the benchmarks are already reflected in the new Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy, adopted by the UNICEF in 2014, notably in such areas as the commitment to embedding communications and public advocacy within strategic priorities, coherent messaging and multilingualism. UNICEF has undertaken a midterm review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, which will provide a further opportunity to strengthen the position of communications and public advocacy within the overarching strategic direction of the organization.
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive heads	
Recommendation 2 Starting from the forthcoming programme and budget cycle, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should reinforce in a sustainable manner the strategic role of the public information and communication function within their organization, by adhering to the nine benchmarks proposed in the present report, as applicable.	**Accepted and in progress** The nine benchmarks will be valuable in informing efforts to measure the implementation of the current UNICEF Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy, and will help to inform discussions and outcomes from the ongoing midterm review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.
Recommendation 3 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should encourage, as applicable, their representatives in the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) at principals' level, and in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Communications and Advocacy Working Group, to coordinate their work closely and to develop strong complementarities and synergies between the two groups in order to further strengthen public information and communication capacity in the United Nations system.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF has demonstrated its commitment to the UNCG system on several levels, including by co-convening UNCG and providing a senior-level adviser to support the implementation of the UNCG Working Group workplan, working closely with the Development Operations Coordination Office and UNCG.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 4 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should take concrete measures to strengthen public information and communications capacity at the field level within their organizations, when applicable. This in turn, would enable local UNCGs to conduct joint activities with due attention to local circumstances and organizations' mandated priorities and reinforce the effectiveness and impact of those activities.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF agrees in principle, but notes that implementation will rely on clear commitments to provide sufficient levels of funding for communications, public information and public advocacy across the organization to meet expected outcomes. UNICEF will use the opportunity of the midterm review of its Strategic Plan to assess various options for resourcing communications and public advocacy.
Recommendation 5 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should develop an effective social media strategy that is based on updated guidelines and is properly aligned with the other respective policies and frameworks/strategies for public information and communications.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF agrees with this recommendation. As part of its new Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy, the organization has developed new digital guidance and approaches and has launched a major digital transformation exercise that will maximize the opportunities provided, especially by social media, for public engagement and action. The organization has also recently developed a response to an audit of its web platforms and procedures, which will also greatly enhance its approach to the appropriate and effective management of social media.
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should strengthen the in-house capacity for social media management, with a view to creating specific content and maintaining organizational accounts, as well as to providing advice on the proper use of social media.	**Accepted and implemented** UNICEF has embarked on strengthening and enhancing its guidance and support to colleagues in the use or management of social media channels.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Review of activities and resources devoted to address climate change in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2015/5)	
1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body	
Recommendation 2 The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should support and endorse the participation of their respective organizations involved in cross-cutting areas directly or indirectly related to climate change in a system-wide United Nations strategy to combat climate change, in a manner consistent with the outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP21).	**Accepted and in progress** As highlighted by the Executive Director in his recent speech to the Executive Board, UNICEF will be strengthening its engagement on climate change. Supporting the outcome of COP21 and Governments in upholding their commitments under the Paris Agreement is part of the work to be done under the Framework.
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive heads	
Recommendation 1 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should present to the governing bodies of their organizations a long-term United Nations system-wide climate change strategy responsive to the outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and request its endorsement and the support necessary for its effective implementation, in order to achieve measurable interim results by 2020.	**Under consideration** As part of the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change, UNICEF has contributed to the draft common-core principles for a United Nations system-wide approach to climate change action, to be presented for approval at the thirty-first meeting of the Committee, and to a discussion paper on the suggested priorities for coordinated United Nations system action on climate change, intended to stimulate discussion within the Committee on the possible way forward towards a comprehensive system-wide strategy.
Recommendation 3 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations involved in areas with clear cross-linkages with climate change should elaborate and agree upon a common methodology to establish criteria to ensure the traceability of specific funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation, seeking consistency and coherence in the context of the climate change regime methodologies.	**Accepted and in progress** The discussion paper on suggested priorities for coordinated United Nations system action on climate change, to be discussed at the next meeting of the High-level Committee on Programmes, includes a recommendation to develop and enhance integrated/blended finance and related accountability through a clear monitoring system. If approved, this would be a step in the direction of a common methodology.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 4 Executive heads of the member organizations of the Chief Executives Board, under the leadership of the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chair of the Board, should promote the development of a common information-sharing system for the measurement and monitoring of the United Nations system activities and resources aimed at addressing climate change, by sector and type of funding, so as to ensure the most cost-efficient and effective delivery of activities to tackle climate change.	**Accepted and in progress** The discussion paper on suggested priorities for coordinated United Nations system action on climate change, to be discussed at the next meeting of the High-level Committee on Programmes, includes the following priorities: • Develop integrated approaches to measuring the impacts of climate change and of climate action • Collaborate on the integrated and accountable use of climate finance If approved, this would be the first step in this regard.
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations involved in country activities in the UNDAF, should ensure that their organizations follow the UNDG guidance on integrating climate change in the UNDAF and build on existing good practices of engagement with the relevant UNFCCC bodies, for climate change assistance at the country and regional level, in close cooperation with the resident coordinators, to enhance and strengthen capacity-building assistance to developing countries through CCAs/UNDAFs.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF, through the UNDAF process, will continue to strengthen its involvement in this regard.

Review of the organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2015/6)

1. Recommendations addressed to the Executive Board/legislative body

Recommendation 5 The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should make it possible for the ombudsman to report to them on systemic issues identified on a regular basis.	**Under consideration** UNICEF is committed to using the informal resolution of conflicts to the fullest extent possible to avoid the resort to litigation and its costs and to promote a culture of dialogue in the organization. It supports this recommendation.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
2. Recommendations addressed to the executive heads	
Recommendation 1 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, in consultation with staff representatives and the existing Ombudsmen, should review, update and disseminate across their respective organizations the terms of reference of the ombudsman, giving due consideration to the direction provided by the present report and using a staff-management consultation mechanism.	**Accepted and in progress** Efforts to finalize the terms of reference of the ombudsman are currently being led by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in consultation with the United Nations Ombudsman, the ombudsmen for the funds and programmes and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, respectively, as well as with management and staff.
Recommendation 2 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, in cooperation with the ombudsman offices, should include questions relating to the ombudsman service in staff surveys and responses should be used by management, staff associations and the ombudsman office to increase staff awareness and promote a better understanding of the ombudsman function in the organization.	**Accepted and not started** UNICEF will implement this recommendation in its next Global Staff Survey.
Recommendation 3 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should request their respective ombudsmen to ensure that their field staff have the option of an in-person consultation with the ombudsman of another United Nations system organization in the same location (for example, the regional ombudsman of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services or the visiting ombudsman of another United Nations system organization).	**Accepted and in progress** The terms of references provide for the regional ombudsmen to consult and liaise with the ombudsmen for the funds and programmes in relation to a case from a staff member of the funds and programmes. Current practice requires the regional ombudsman to provide urgent assistance, if required, and then refer the matter to the ombudsmen of the funds and programmes.
Recommendation 4 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should request their ombudsman offices to include in their work programme the development of a case management manual and to seek the cooperation of other United Nations system ombudsmen with a view to achieving a certain level of harmonization across the system.	**Accepted and in progress** The Office of the Ombudsman for the United Nations Funds and Programmes already has a draft case management manual under development. Consultations will be undertaken internally to ensure harmonization and consistency within the United Nations common system.
Recommendation 6 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should request the ombudsman to include continuous training and certification of ombudsman practitioners in the strategic workplans of their ombudsman offices.	**Accepted and implemented** This is standard practice in the Office of the Ombudsman for the United Nations Funds and Programmes and is being done in respect of the two newly appointed ombudsmen, as well.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 7 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should establish an accountability and appraisal system for the ombudsman services and include the relevant provisions in the ombudsman's terms of reference. The system and the provisions should reflect the specific requirements of the ombudsman function by making accountability and the appraisal process inclusive and participatory for all stakeholders.	**Accepted and in progress** The challenge is to identify a system that does not undermine or appear to undermine the independence and objectivity of the ombudsmen.
Recommendation 8 The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should request their ombudsmen to discuss the findings and recommendations of the present review at the meeting of the United Nations and Related International Organizations to be held in 2016 and to decide on the course of actions they intend to reflect in their programmes of work, either individually or collectively.	**Accepted and not started** Acceptance reported by the ombudsmen.